

Deschutes Provincial Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: July 29, 2016

Time: 09:00 am

Location: Deschutes NF Headquarters
Bend, Oregon

Attendees:

Kevin Larkin	Ed Keith	Tami Kerr
Dennis Oliphant	Lauren DuRocher	Marilyn Miller
Teresa Kubo	Paul Anderson	Chuck Arnold
Bridget Moran	Erik Fernandez	Ken Fahlgren
Carol Benkosky	John Allen	Beth Peer
Chris Johnson	David Stowe	Elvira Young
Susan Skakel		

Introduction

Opening from John Allen

- Keep the whole basin (scale) in mind. With these site specific visits, keep larger context in mind.
- Working on sustainable recreation, restoration, thinking of climate change and managing water. All connected issues – need to think how best to focus time.

Sustainable Recreation

- Recreation is a hot topic around the basin – Crook County, Jefferson County, Warm Springs Tribal land: connecting towns to landscape through trails and building up trail systems.
- John went through the different committees out there - CFLR (not FACA); PAC (FACA sanctioned); and the upcoming Trails Collaborative.
- Trail Collaborative would be led by outside groups/partners, like CFLR
 - o This group would get more into the details of trail specifics
 - o More locally-based, the province scale is too large
 - o There will be cross over between these different groups and different areas
 - o Goal is to have something forming by the end of the calendar year.
 - o Funding Source- Rika Nelson (Discover your forest) has been submitting grants. So far there are two \$10,000 grants to help fund a trails collaborative. COIC is interested in pursuing more grant funding.
- Sustainable Recreation subcommittee gave thoughts on focus and issues. Some common themes were the pros/cons of permitting for recreation area. Use is undoubtedly increasing even on weekday during traditions “quiet times.” How to allow for last minute planning/excursions, etc. One size doesn’t fit all with different areas (backcountry/urban interface, casual day visitor/long term recreationist, varying ages, etc.). Defining the problem is almost the easier part, the solutions are sticky and harder.

- Challenges of number of meetings and scheduling –focus efforts and spend time more effectively
- How to not duplicate efforts with CFLR (and potentially trails collaborative). For example CFLR is looking into where are the big elk/game corridors, calving, winter range, etc. Need a “master” map of all this information from ODFW, FS, BLM, etc.
 - o Will look into trying to pull some of this information together.

Forest Restoration & “Scaling up” Treatments West Bend Project

Some general background on West Bend Project from Tami Kerr, Bend/Ft. Rock Ranger District Operations Team Leader. The project was mostly in dry mixed conifer/Ponderosa pine forest. Focused on areas along edge of urban growth, bend watershed, WUI. These areas were clearcut in the 1920s/30s before FS management. Over time they have become dense from fire exclusion and other management. Post planning, the project was split into 4 implementation stewardship projects: Ruble, Yen, Paso and Euro.

The balance of pros/cons of stewardship projects (versus a timber sale): innovation by contractor where new equipment was actually developed to accomplish work; proceeds of sale go to project restoration work; not always appropriate for project; keeping in mind timber receipts and funding to county for roads, etc.

Prescribed burning – continued challenge in not seeing projects get all the burning completed. The interagency challenge of smoke management is main hurdle in getting work completed. Funding could be adjusted from mowing/mastication to burning in some cases if smoke management changed. Getting message out about trade-offs of wildfire smoke vs prescribed fire smoke.

Scalability- Discussion of if a project like this could be applied on a larger landscape scale. Move at a scale that makes a difference. There are potential implications of going too big too fast: example of removing woody debris from streams. The ongoing dialogue and as a group we are getting better at reviewing was done, monitoring and determining what can be done better.

Marking- The project was a combo of painting trees, designation by description (DXD) and designation by prescription (DXP). Weighing efficiency and getting the outcomes desired. In this area using DXD and D by P are newer and take contractors more time.

Ryan Ranch Wetlands Restoration Project

This project came about after several years of working with Deschutes Basin Board of Control, USFWS, and others. A limited license water right is being held for water (600 acre feet). This is temporary and lots of monitoring is occurring. Looking at providing effective habitat and restoring area. Right now about 400 acres of water are being fed into the system. Monitoring points are measuring water saturation, water levels in, etc. So far seems to be successful with only a small portion of water filtering to subsurface.

Bridget Moran from USFWS discussed the history of the site. This area is a historic site of Oregon Spotted Frog (now listed species) with numerous historic specimens from this site. Restoration for spotted frog is a hot topic with limited options. This site now provides 70 acres of habitat which is large for this area. Currently there is no translocation of frogs as there is a breeding spot upriver. Work with irrigation is ongoing and have made progress in thinking of efficiency of movement of water, critical areas, etc. Has been a collaborative process and much better to go this way than a strong arm/litigate approach.

With climate change, thinking about water sinks versus use and these opportunities will be important.

Plants- Reed canary grass is an invasive here and progress is being made at reducing the population. Lots of native plants and the area should naturally shift with some incoming willows and cottonwood.

Next Meetings / Field Trips

The next meeting will be held on the Ochoco National Forest. Please visit doodle poll which offers three Fridays in October: <http://doodle.com/poll/rcc4hgxvesub66ym>. Details to be determined, but this meeting will include a presentation on climate change, and some time out in the field (weather permitting).

*If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together*